

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations and represents the culmination of efforts to establish a single inter-governmental health agency. As such, it inherits the functions of antecedent organizations such as the Office International d'Hygiène Publique, the Health Organization of the League of Nations, and the Health Division of UNRRA.

WHO had its origin in the proposal made at the United Nations Conference held in San Francisco in 1945 that a specialized agency be created to deal with all matters relating to health. In 1946, representatives of 61 governments met at the International Health Conference, New York, drafted and signed the WHO Constitution, and established an Interim Commission to serve until the Constitution could be ratified by 26 Member States of the United Nations. The Constitution came into force on 7 April 1948, the first World Health Assembly met in Geneva in June 1948, and on 1 September 1948 the permanent Organization was established.

The work of the Organization is carried out by three organs: the World Health Assembly, the supreme authority, to which all Member States send delegates; the Executive Board, the executive organ of the Health Assembly, consisting of 18 persons designated by as many Member States; and a Secretariat under the Director-General.

The scope of WHO's interests and activities exceeds that of any previous international health organization and includes, in addition to major projects relating to malaria, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, maternal and child health, nutrition, and environmental sanitation, special programmes on public-health administration, epidemic diseases, mental health, professional and technical training, and other public-health subjects. It is also continuing work begun by earlier organizations on biological standardization, unification of pharmacopoeias, addiction-producing drugs, health statistics, international sanitary regulations, and the collection and dissemination of technical information, including epidemiological statistics.

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GUIDE FOR NATIONAL STUDIES OF NURSING RESOURCES

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NOTE

The views expressed in this Guide do not necessarily represent the decisions or the stated policy of the World Health Organization.

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